

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 05981

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, MARR, TECH, SP, US
SUBJECT: SPANISH NAVY INTEREST IN PRODUCTION OF
MILITARY EQUIPMENT

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1. SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS AGAIN HIGH-LEVEL CONCERN IN THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARTICLE OF THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION DEALING WITH THE TRANSFER OF MILITARY TECHNOLOGY AND CO-PRODUCTION. EARLY ACTION IS REQUESTED ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR A VISIT TO THE U.S. OF SPANISH INDUSTRIALISTS INTERESTED IN THE PRODUCTION OF NAVAL EQUIPMENT. THIS IS A MATTER WHICH HAS BEEN RAISED TWICE IN THE U.S.-SPANISH COUNCIL AND WHICH WE CAN EXPECT WILL BE RAISED AGAIN IF AND WHEN FIRST VICE PRESIDENT AND DEFENSE MINISTER GUTIERREZ MELLADO VISITS WASHINGTON. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER THE REFTEL WAS TRANSMITTED, THE QUESTION OF PRODUCTION IN SPAIN OF U.S.-DESIGNED EQUIPMENT FOR THE
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SPANISH FAST FRIGATES (FFG'S) WAS TREATED IN DECEMBER DURING A VISIT OF SPANISH NAVAL OFFICERS TO WASHINGTON, BUT MATTERS WERE NOT MOVED FORWARD BY THAT MEETING. WHILE WE HAVE NOT HAD A SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO THE REFERENCED TELEGRAM, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS A FAVORABLE DISPOSITION IN WASHINGTON TOWARD SEEKING A WAY TO MEET AT LEAST SOME OF THE SPANISH DESIRES, IN IMPLEMENTATION OF

ARTICLE 9 OF SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT 7 OF THE TREATY OF
FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION.

3. AT THE MAY 24 MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE FOR
POLITICO-MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS, THE SPANISH SIDE
STRONGLY URGED EARLY FURTHER EFFORTS TO PREPARE THE GROUND
FOR THE PROPOSED VISIT OF SPANISH INDUSTRIALISTS TO THE
U.S.

4. THE SPANISH DIPLOMATIC CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE
ARGUED FORCEFULLY THAT U.S. ARMS TRANSFER POLICY, WHICH
PLACED SPAIN IN THE POSITION OF BEING ONLY A "QUASI-ALLY",
CONTRASTED SHARPLY WITH THE U.S. APPROACH TO THE BILATERAL
DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP WHEN MATTERS OF DIRECT INTEREST TO
THE U.S. WERE INVOLVED. IN SUCH CASES, SPAIN HAD EVEN
FOUND ITSELF ASKED TO GO FURTHER THAN THE NATO ALLIES.
THE SPANISH NAVY REPRESENTATIVE ARGUED ALSO THAT U.S.
ATTITUDES CONTRASTED SHARPLY WITH THOSE OF SOME EUROPEAN
MEMBERS OF NATO, WITH WHOM SPAIN HAD NO TREATY RELATIONSHIP
BUT WHICH WERE SUBSTANTIALLY MORE OPEN TO CO-PRODUCTION
ARRANGEMENTS AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY TO SPANISH INDUSTRY
THE SPANISH NAVY, HE SAID, FELT IT WAS BEING PUSHED IN THE
DIRECTION OF CHOOSING EUROPEAN EQUIPMENT EVEN IN CASES IN
WHICH THE U.S. EQUIPMENT WAS STRONGLY PREFERRED. THE
SPANISH PARTICIPANTS IN THIS EXCHANGE RETURNED SEVERAL
TIMES TO THE THEME OF THERE BEING A U.S. LIST OF PREFERRED
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COUNTRIES IN ARMS TRANSFER MATTERS (NATO, ANZUS, JAPAN) IN
WHICH SPAIN, A TREATY PARTNER, IS NOT INCLUDED.

5. THESE ARGUMENTS ARE NOT NEW. THEY ALSO REFLECT THE
DESIRE AT THE VERY HIGHEST LEVEL OF THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT
TO GIVE GREATER SUPPORT TO MILITARY AND MILITARY-RELATED
INDUSTRIES IN SPAIN, FOR REASONS RELATING TO BOTH THE
ECONOMIC HEALTH OF THE COUNTRY AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
A FIRMER BASE FOR MODERNIZATION OF THE SPANISH ARMED
FORCES.

6. U.S. REPRESENTATIVES ON THE COMMITTEE REVIEWED AGAIN
ON THIS OCCASION THE PURPOSES OF U.S. ARMS TRANSFER POLICY
AND OUR DETERMINATION, WITHIN THAT POLICY, TO HONOR FULLY
BOTH THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT OF THE TREATY WITH SPAIN.
THEY POINTED TO THE CONSIDERABLE EFFORTS ON THE U.S. SIDE
TO COOPERATE WITH THE SPANISH ARMED FORCES, WHICH IN
CERTAIN CASES HAD RESULTED IN COOPERATION AT A LEVEL EVEN
HIGHER THAN THAT WITH OUR NATO ALLIES. THEY SUGGESTED
THAT THERE IS A DISPOSITION ON THE PART OF THE U.S. TO
GIVE SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION TO THIS SPECIFIC SPANISH
PROPOSAL FOR A VISIT OF INDUSTRIALISTS.

7. IT WAS AGREED IN THIS SPECIFIC CASE THAT THE U.S. SIDE OF THE COMMITTEE WOULD REQUEST AN EARLY INDICATION FROM WASHINGTON AS TO EXACTLY WHAT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WAS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO MOVE AHEAD TOWARD A VISIT OF SPANISH INDUSTRIALISTS. CONCURRENTLY, AT THE REQUEST OF THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVES, THE SPANISH NAVY WILL ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE A MORE DETAILED PROPOSAL.

8. WHILE THIS PROJECT IS LIMITED TO PRODUCTION IN SPAIN OF EQUIPMENT TO BE USED ON SPANISH NAVY SHIPS, AND POSSIBL SOME PRODUCTION FOR EXPORT, THE SPANISH SIDE MADE CLEAR THAT IT WOULD HOPE IN TIME TO EXTEND THIS COOPERATION TO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MADRID 05981

EQUIPMENT OF INTEREST TO THE SPANISH ARMY AND AIR FORCE.

9. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE INDICATION AS TO THE PROSPECTS FOR WASHINGTON ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING AN EARLY VISIT BY SPANISH INDUSTRIALISTS, AS WELL AS TO WHAT INFORMATION GAPS NEED TO BE FILLED BY THE SPANISH IN ADVANCE OF SUCH A VISIT. EATON

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